

Scoping Notice

The Ozark St. Francis National Forests are proposing to approve the use of herbicide at existing gas wells maintained by SEECO Inc. This would include pads plus a 5 foot buffer around the pad locations and pipeline risers associated with them. These proposals qualify for use of an Energy Policy Act of 2005 Section 390 Categorical Exclusion (CE).

This routine maintenance would occur at approximately 36 existing wells on the Pleasant Hill, Boston Mountain and Magazine Ranger Districts. Herbicide use will be limited to the use of Glyphosate (commonly known as Round up) and label recommended surfactants or factory added surfactants. All standards listed in the Revised Forest Plan will be followed. A separate CE will be used for each well location.

Since this proposal is for routine maintenance it meets the requirements for the following Section 390 Categorical Exclusion #5: *Maintenance of a minor activity, other than any construction or major renovation of a building or facility.*

Well pads and associated pipeline risers are approved during the Application for Permit to Drill (APD) stage or the Operating Plan stage for Reserved & Outstanding Rights, and are maintained for the life of the well. As part of the maintenance, a defensible space must be maintained around the equipment. Use of herbicide, as proposed, will assist in meeting this need.

When the wells were constructed a Biological Assessment/Biological Evaluation (BA/BE) and Cultural Resource inventory with State Historic Office and Tribal Consultation were done to determine effects of well development. An additional (BA/BE) and Cultural Resource evaluation will be done to determine effects of maintenance of the existing well pads and risers with Glyphosate. The BA/BE will evaluate effects of the proposal on Threatened and Endangered species and Forest Service sensitive species.

The Ozark-St. Francis National Forests invite your comments on the proposed actions before September 15, 2010. If you have comments or questions about this proposal please contact Steve Duzan at (479) 964-7282 or sduzan@fs.fed.us. Or mail comments to Ozark-St Francis National Forests, 605 West Main, Russellville, Arkansas 72801, ATTN: Steve Duzan